REMARKS

Prior Art Rejections

In the Office Action mailed on July 16, 2007, the Examiner rejected the pending independent claim (claim 39) as being anticipated by Norris (US 2003/0072013 A1), stating that Norris contained all of the elements of this independent claim. It should be noted, however, that Norris describes a printer that can receive audio information, but then uses a speech recognition software module to convert that audio information into text that is printed as characters. This is not a feature of the present Lexmark invention, and claim 39 has been amended to emphasize that aspect.

This amendment by itself should make claim 39 patentably distinct from Norris. However, the Examiner cited other prior art references that could potentially be used in an obviousness rejection for claim 39, so claim 39 has also been amended to account for those references. More specifically, some of the dependent claims were rejected in view of Morohashi (US 6,043,899), which discloses a printing system that uses a microphone to accept audio information, and then stores that information in "dot code data blocks" and prints those dot code data blocks onto a print medium that is "tape like." (See column 5, lines 35-37 of Morohashi.) This tape-like print media is some type of continuous piece of media (e.g., paper) that must be cut periodically, or the tape would become essentially "infinite" in length, and therefore difficult to handle. To solve this problem, Morohashi includes a print medium cutter lever 8 for cutting the print media at a desired position (see column 5, lines 56, 59). This is quite different from the present Lexmark invention, which uses standard sheets of print media, such as letter-sized paper or transparencies. This aspect of the present Lexmark invention has been emphasized in the amendment to claim 39.

Another prior art reference cited by the Examiner is Soscia (US 6,441,921 B1), which discloses a method for imprinting and reading a sound message on a greeting card. Soscia uses a microphone to receive audio information, and uses an optical scanner to receive a photographic image that can be placed on the greeting card. The audio information is also placed on the greeting card by the printer, and in Soscia, the audio information is printed using ink that is

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visible in infrared wavelengths.   This information is printed directly over the "normal" image on the print media (which is to be a greeting card image of "regular" visible colors), however, the infrared wavelengths are almost invisible to the human naked eye, and the printed audio information thereby does not detract much from the "regular" image that is to be seen by the human user.   A special lens assembly 66 and a two-dimensional image sensor 68 are used to scan the card for playing back the audio information.   This lens assembly/image scanner is to be portable, much like a flashlight.   (See column 6, lines 52-60, and column 7, lines 23-26.)   The present Lexmark invention is not specifically designed with the purpose of printing directly on an image that is to be viewed by a human user, and instead reserves empty spaces on the print media for the audio information.   This is disclosed in the figures, including FIG. 8, FIG. 10, and FIG.